

DD/S

56-0705

28 February 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Director of Training

SUBJECT : Basic Orientation Course

1. There was a time when those of us concerned with training personnel of the Agency encountered as a rather common form of resistance the fact that supervisors were not convinced of the necessity for training or of its practical value. It seems to me that there is today much less need to sell supervisors on the value of training although it is quite clear, I think, that training, particularly of older hands, is not being accomplished as rapidly as is desirable. There are, of course, many reasons for this, many of which are practical and well intended by thoroughly responsible and enlightened supervisors. A principal one remains that of sparing individuals from their regular assignments for full time period of three to six weeks.

2. It would seem desirable, therefore, to explore the possibility of accomplishing through other methods some of the training now available only through full time attendance at courses. Specifically I have in mind the BOC. My proposal is that the BOC be packaged as a "correspondence" course so that larger numbers of persons could complete this phase of their training at their desks and at home. The Communism phase of this course includes, I believe, no classified material and hence could be studied away from Agency premises even though the intelligence phase of the course would necessarily have to be done almost entirely at the office.

3. I do not know how long it might take an individual to cover this course by studying an hour or so per day. I do not believe that this method of training is more efficient or to be preferred to the full time attendance at a formal course, but I am convinced that more people simultaneously and therefore in less elapsed time will be able to complete the training if it is made available in this form.

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4. It would seem practical to enforce achievement standards through administration of the BOC waiver test or some variant of it when an individual had completed the requisite program of study.

5. I, of course, am convinced of the practical value of the BOC in terms of effective organizational knowledge as well as in terms of morale and attitude conditioning. Also, this course is generally a prerequisite to other formal courses offered by OTR. Also, I am not unmindful that no matter how desirable it may be that personnel of the Agency complete series of training courses, no operating unit can afford to devote more than a modest amount of its available man-weeks into the business of training. Let me point out that if the BOC can be made available on this basis, it will permit supervisors to take advantage of whatever workload cycles occur and will not necessitate conformance to the scheduling cycles characteristic of the formal courses. Furthermore, in theory at least, for every two persons who are able to complete the BOC through this method one person can be released full time to attend the Operations Support Course with a net saving of one man weeks' absence from the production unit.

6. This outlines some of the principal points in this proposition although there are, of course, many others at least some of which I have thought of and would be glad to discuss with you if you wish. I will appreciate it if you and the faculty of the Basic school could give this sympathetic consideration in the near future.

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[Redacted]
Special Assistant to the
Deputy Director (Support)

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